

Remarks

This communication is considered fully responsive to the Office Action. Claims 1, 3, 7-9, 11, 12, 14-22, 24, 25, 40, and 41 were examined. Claims 1, 3, 7-9, 11, 12, 14-22, 24, 25, 40, and 41 stand rejected. Claims 1, 7, 8, 17, 21, and 40 are amended. No claims are currently canceled. No new claims have been added. Reexamination and reconsideration of the pending claims are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a) – Kobayashi and Iggulden

The Office Action rejected claims 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, 40, and 41 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 7,295,339 to Kobayashi (“Kobayashi”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,918,723 to Iggulden (“Iggulden”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Independent claim 1 is amended to recite “the printing device printing the electronic document to provide a recipient with a hard copy of the entire document upon which the recipient can write; the printing device scanning handwritten content manually handwritten on the hard copy of the entire document by the recipient; and the printing device adding only the handwritten content from the hard copy of the entire document to the electronic document without replacing original content of the electronic document” (emphasis added). Independent claims 17 and 40 are amended to include similar recitations.

With reference to Fig. 4, Kobayashi discloses “a signature is written by the user on the touch panel 161, and the signature information (bitmap information) is provided to

the signature memory 19 through the operation section controller 17 (S4)” (emphasis added). This is fundamentally different than printing a document for a recipient to manually sign and then scanning the signed document in order to collect the signature. With reference to Fig. 11, Iggulden also discloses collecting the signature using a digitizing pad 60 or “on a strip of paper 62 read by an optical scanner 64.” Col. 10, lines 34-36. Again, collecting a signature using a digitizing pad, or even scanning a “strip of paper” with only the signature, is fundamentally different than printing a document for a recipient to manually sign and then scanning the signed document in order to collect the signature.

For at least the foregoing reasons claims 1, 17, and 40 are believed to be allowable over the cited references and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection of each of the independent claims.

Although Applicant believes the claims are not disclosed or taught by the cited references for the reasons discussed above, Applicant hereby expressly reserves the right to submit a Rule 1.131 affidavit and have Kobayashi removed as prior art if this or a similar rejection is maintained in a subsequent Office Action.

Claims 3, 7, 8, 11, and 12 depend from independent claim 1; claims 18, 19, 20, 21, and 24 depend from independent claim 17; and claim 41 depends from independent claim 40. Each of the independent claims is believed to be allowable. Therefore, each of the dependent claims is also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as the respective independent claims.

In addition, claim 7 is amended to further recite “wherein scanning handwritten content comprises the printing device only scanning the manually handwritten content manually handwritten on the hard copy of the entire document by the recipient” (emphasis added). Collecting a signature using a digitizing pad, or even scanning a “strip of paper” with only the signature, as taught by the combination of Kobayashi and Iggulden, is fundamentally different than scanning the manually handwritten content manually handwritten on the hard copy of the entire document by the recipient.

Claim 8 is amended to further recite “wherein only scanning the manually handwritten content comprises the printing device only scanning handwritten content contained within an input block of the entire document” (emphasis added). Claim 21 is amended to include similar recitations. Collecting a signature using a digitizing pad, or even scanning a “strip of paper” with only the signature, as taught by the combination of Kobayashi and Iggulden, is fundamentally different than only scanning handwritten content contained within an input block of the entire document.

Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 18, 19, 20, 21, 24, and 41 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a) – Kobayashi, Iggulden, and Adobe User Guide

The Office Action rejected claims 9 and 22 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Iggulden and further in view of Adobe Acrobat 4.0 User Guide (“Adobe User Guide”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claim 9 depends from independent claim 1; and claim 22 depends from independent claim 17. Independent claims 1 and 17 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, the teachings of the Adobe User Guide do not address the missing recitations discussed above for claims 1 and 17. Therefore, claims 9 and 22 are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 17, respectively. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 9 and 22 is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. 103(a) – Kobayashi, Iggulden, and Brown

The Office Action rejected claims 14-16, and 25 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kobayashi in view of Iggulden and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,671,805 to Brown (“Brown”). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Claims 14-16 depend from independent claim 1; and claim 25 depends from independent claim 17. Independent claims 1 and 17 are believed to be allowable. Furthermore, the teachings of Brown do not address the missing recitations discussed above for claims 1 and 17. Therefore, claims 14-16, and 25 are also believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons as claims 1 and 17, respectively. Withdrawal of the rejection of claims 14-16, and 25 is respectfully requested.

Conclusion

The Applicant respectfully requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this matter.

Respectfully Submitted,

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